The Unhappy Memorable Song
Of the HUNTING of
CHEVY-CHASE.

GOD prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all;
A woeful hunting once there did,
In Chevy-Chase befall.
To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Earl Piercy took his way,
The child may rue that is unborn,
The hunting of that day.
The stout Earl of Northumberland,
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods,
Three summers days to take;
The chiefest Harts in Chevy-Chace,
To kill and bear away.
The tidings to Earl Douglas came,
In Scotland where he lay;
Who sent Earl Piercy present word,
He would prevent his sport,
The English Earl not fearing this,
Did to the woods resort,
With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew full well, in time of need,
To aim their shafts aright.
The gallant greyhound swiftly run,
To chase the fallow deer,
On Monday they began to hunt,
When day light did appear,
And long before high noon they had,
An hundred fat bucks slain,

Then having din'd the drovers went,
To rouſe them up again.
The bowmen muſter'd on the hills,
Well able to endure,
Their back ſides all with ſpecial care,
That day were guarded ſure.
The hounds ran ſwiftly through the wood,
The nimble deer to take,
And with their cries the hills and dales,
An eccho ſhrill did make.
Lord Piercy to the quarry went,
To view the tender deer.
Quoth he, Earl Douglas promiſed,
This day to meet me here:
If that I thought he would not come;
No longer would I ſtay.
Then ſtept a brave young gentleman,
Thus to the Earl did ſay:
Lo! yonder doth Earl Douglas come,
His men in armour bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottiſh ſpears,
All marching in our ſight;
All men of pleaſant Tiviotdale,
Faſt by the river Tweed.
Then ceaſe your ſport, Earl Piercy ſaid,
And take your bows with ſpeed:
And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance;
For never was there champion yet,
In Scotland or in France,
That ever did on horſeback come,
But if my hap it were,
I durſt encounter man for man,
With him to break a ſpear.

Douglas on a milk-white ſteed,
Much like a baron bold,
Rode foremoſt of his company,
Where armour ſhone like gold.
Shew me, ſaid he, whoſe men you be,
That hunt ſo boldly here;
That without my conſent dare chaſe,
And kill my fallow deer.
The firſt that did the anſwer make,
Was noble Piercy he,
Who ſaid, we liſt not to declare,
Or ſhew whoſe men we be;
Yet we will ſpend our deareſt blood,
The chiefeſt harts to ſlay.
Then Douglas ſwore a ſolemn oath,
And thus in rage did ſay;
Before I will out braved be,
One of us two ſhall die:
I know thee well, an Earl thou art,
Lord Piercy, ſo am I.
But truſt me, Piercy, I think it were,
A great offence to kill,
Any of theſe our harmleſs men,
For they have done no ill;
Let thou and I the battle try,
And ſet our men aſide.
Accurſt be he, Lord Piercy ſaid,
By whom this is deny'd.
Then ſtept a gallant 'ſquire forth,
Witherington was his name,
Who ſaid, I would not have it told,
To Henry our king for ſhame,
That e'er my captain fought on foot,
And I ſtood looking on;

You are two Earls, ſaid Witherington,
And I a 'ſquire alone:
I'll do my beſt, that do I may,
Whilſt I have power to ſtand;
Whilſt I have power to wield my ſword,
I'll fight with heart and hand.
Our Engliſh archers bent their bows,
Their hearts were good and true;
At the firſt flight of arrows ſent,
Full threeſcore Scots they ſlew.
To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Earl Douglas had the bent.
The captains mov'd with mucke pride,
Their ſpears to ſhivers ſent,
They clos'd full faſt on every ſide,
No ſlackneſs there was found;
Whilſt many a gallant gentleman,
Lay gaſping on the ground.
Oh, Chriſt! it was a grief to ſee,
And likewiſe for to hear,
The groans of men lying in their gore,
And ſcatter'd here and there.
At laſt theſe two great Earls did meet,
Like captains of great might,
Like lions mov'd, they laid on loads,
And made a bloody fight;
They fought until they both did ſweat,
With ſwords of temper'd ſteel,
Until the blood, like drops of rain,
They trickling down did feel.
Yield thee, Earl Piercy, Douglas ſaid,
In faith I will thee bring,
Where thou ſhalt high advanced be,
By James our Scottiſh king:

Thy ranſom I will freely give,
And thus report of thee,
Thou art the moſt courageous knight,
That ever I did ſee.
To the Earl Douglas, Piercy ſaid,
Thy proffers I do ſcorn;
I will not yield to any Scot,
That ever yet was born.
With that there came an arrow keen,
Out of an Engliſh bow,
Which ſtruck Earl Douglas to the heart,
A deep and deadly blow;
Who never ſpoke more words than theſe,
Fight on, my merry men all;
For why, my life is at an end,
Lord Piercy ſees my fall!
Then, leaving life Earl Piercy took
The dead man by the hand,
And ſaid, Earl Douglas, for thy ſake
Would I had loſt my land:
O Chriſt! my very heart doth bleed,
With ſorrow for thy ſake;
For ſure a more renowned knight
Miſchance did never take.
A knight amongſt the Scots there was,
Who ſaw Earl Douglas die,
Who ſtrait in wrath did vow revenge,
Upon the Lord Piercy;
Sir Hugh Montgomery was he call'd,
Who with a ſpear moſt bright,
Well mounted on a gallant ſteed,
Rode fiercely through the fight,
And paſs'd our Engliſh archers all,
Without all dread and fear;

And through Earl Piercy's body then,
He thruſt his hateful ſpear;
With ſuch vehement force and might
He did his body gore,
That the ſpear went through the other ſide,
A full cloth-yard and more:
So thus did both theſe nobles die.
Whoſe courage none could ſtain,
An Engliſh archer then perceiv'd,
The noble Earl was ſlain;
He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a truſty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long,
Unto the head drew he;
Againſt Sir Hugh Montgomery,
Aright his ſhaft he ſet:
The grey gooſe-wing that was thereon,
In his heart's blood was wet.
This fight did laſt from break of day,
'Till ſetting of the ſun;
For when they rung the evening bell,
The battle ſcarce was done.
With the Earl Piercy, there was ſlain,
Sir John of Ogerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff, and Sir John,
Sir James that bold baron;
With good Sir John and good Sir James,
Both knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Rabbin there was ſlain,
Whoſe proweſs did ſurmount,
For Witherington needs muſt I wail,
As one in doleful dumps;
For when his legs were ſmitten off,
He fought upon his ſtumps.

And with Earl Douglas there was ſlain,
Sir Hugh Montgomery,
Sir Charles Currel who from the field,
Foot would one never flee;
Sir Charles Murrel of Ratcliff too,
His ſiſter's ſon was he;
Sir David Lamb, ſo eſteem'd,
They ſaved could not be.
And the lord Maxwell in likewiſe,
Did with Earl Douglas die.
Of twenty hundred Scottiſh ſpears,
Scarce fifty-five did fly.
Of fifteen hundred Engliſhmen,
Went home but fifty-three:
The reſt were ſlain in Chevy-Chaſe,
Under the green wood tree.
Next day did many widows come,
Their huſbands to bewail:
They waſh'd their wounds in briny tears,
Yet all would not prevail.
Their bodies, bath'd in purple gore,
With them they bore away,
And kiſs'd them dead a thouſand times,
When they were clad in clay.
The news was brought to Edinburgh,
Where Scotland's king did reign,
That the Earl Douglas ſuddenly,
Was with an arrow ſlain,
Oh, heavy news! king James did ſay,
Scotland can witneſs be,
I have not any captain more,
Of ſuch account as he.
Like tidings to king Henry came,
Within as little ſpace,

That Pier'y of Northumberland,
Was ſlain in Chevy-Chace.
Then God be with him, ſaid our king,
Sith 'twill no better be;
I truſt I have, within my realm,
Five hundred good as he;
Yet ſhall not Scot nor Scotland ſay,
But I will vengeance take,
And be revenged on them all,
For my Lord Piercy's ſake.
This vow the king full well perform'd,
After at Humble-Down,
Where fifty Scottiſh earls were ſlain,
With men of great renown;
And of the reſt, of ſmall account,
Did many thouſands die,
Thus ended the hunting of Chevy-Chace,
Made by the Lord Piercy.
God ſave the king, and bleſs the land,
In plenty, joy, and peace;
And grant henceforth, that foul debate,
'Twixt noblemen may ceaſe.

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